

GETTING STARTED WITH CREATING COMICS AND GRAPHIC NOVELS —SOME TEACHING STRATEGIES

Before creating a comic or graphic novel, students need to be familiar with the components and conventions...encourage discussion, reflection

De-construct - View a variety of comic strips and graphic novels - Note similarities and differences, features, components

Introduce comic/graphic novel terminology – e.g. gutters, speech balloons or word bubbles; word bubble tails; captions (narrative text boxes), etc.;

Explore the types of fonts for titles and sound effects, panel templates used in various graphic novels, - types of speech balloons (dashed-line balloon for whispering, cloud shape for thinking, sharp tails for emphasis, curved tail for normal dialogue, long (extended tail) for far-off dialogue, joined speech balloons...as afterthought or continued speech

Review samples to identify mood and tone of characters based on the conventions used

Review transitions in samples...when and why used; what is overt/implicit; what inferences can be made 'between the frames'?



Getting Started...

Model for students the pre-planning stage. Perhaps use a 'thinkaloud' to demonstrate the use of an organizer to identify the characters, setting, mood, problem and resolution for a comic that you would like to create.

Use the ideas from the organizer to write a synopsis of the story that outlines the plot and where the characters fit in.

Then have the students do the same.

Next, using a storyboard or page templates from Comic Life, model how to sketch out the story including the dialogue and narration; include rough sketches or symbols for the characters; include dialogue in speech balloons and narration in captions. Use student suggestions as you build the storyboard as to conventions and techniques to use.

Then the students work on their storyboards based on the information in their organizer and synopsis.



Students self edit as well as peer edit and receive teacher input
Students collect their images...these could be photographs, images from the Internet (ensuring copyright rules are upheld); images that are created in a paint program and saved; scanned images, etc.
Students use Comic Life to create their comics.

***Remind them to save their work often!

